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ABSTRACT

Results of a survey of college students to determine attitude change toward the Third World as a result of their participation in classes taught by faculty members involved in a Third World Faculty Development Seminar are discussed. Faculty from many disciplines participated in the seminar and then integrated Third World materials into their courses. A survey questionnaire was administered to students before and after completing the course. Results demonstrated a significant increase in students' empathy and in their awareness of conditions in the Third World as a result of course participation. Most change occurred in students' understanding of how the international economic system perpetuates the poverty of the Third World. Age, sex, and political views were found to be significant factors in explaining different attitudes toward developing nations; the number of credits completed, income, religion, travel, and race or ethnicity were not found to be significant factors. The greatest attitude change was recorded among political conservatives, blacks, younger students, upper income groups, religious conservatives, males, and Protestants. (RM)

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THE CHALLENGE TO PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING OF AND CHANGE ATTITUDES TOWARD THE THIRD WORLD

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Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council for Geographic Education (Toronto, Ontario, Canada, October 17-20, 1984).

The need to enhance both knowledge and understanding of the Third World is enormous and increasingly urgent as we live in a fast changing and ever more interdependent world. Global ignorance among American students (and, one might venture to add, among most adult Americans) is appalling. It has been demonstrated in study after study how little people know about the rest of the world, its environments, peoples, cultures, political systems and so on, and how little they understand about the reasons for the poverty and the lack of development in most of the Third World, and the growing gap between rich and poor countries.

A global perspective is essential partly because we live in a "global village," a world where what we are and do is known almost immediately all around the world, and conversely where events overseas have a swift impact upon us. Increased dependence by the United States on countries overseas both for raw materials (particularly minerals and energy), and for markets for our agricultural commodities and manufactured and technological products necessitates greater understanding of the places and peoples with whom we trade and greater sensitivity to their cultural values and expectations. In addition, political unrest around the world in the future will probably be increasingly related to unequal economic conditions and to what is perceived by the Third World as an unfair international economic system. We have to live in this world, understand it, and seek solutions to problems such as these for the mutual benefit of all.

As George W. Bonham, chairman of the Education and World View national task force expressed it, "we live in a world that is increasingly anarchical, increasingly unpredictable, and increasingly a world not of American

choosing or of America's imagination . . . . The role that education must play in the years ahead is inexorable and plain to see. The world has unalterably changed, and so must American education . . . . Education should expose students to other cultures and to new world circumstances,"[1]

The challenge is obvious: the solutions less so. The problems of global ignorance and insensitivity have to be attacked from many directions simultaneously. This paper outlines some of the approaches that have been considered and tried at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, in the hope that it will generate discussion and spark an interchange of worthwhile ideas. It includes also the results of an attempt to measure the effectiveness of one part of our strategy (a faculty development seminar on the Third World) through a survey of students' attitudes toward the Third World.

Enhancing global knowledge and understanding can be accomplished in a variety of ways, from incorporating an international perspective into existing courses in the different disciplines and schools, to instituting new courses on such topics as the United States in an Interdependent World, Introduction to the Third World, Women in Developing Countries, Third World Nations, World Resources, Global Issues, and so on. We are currently considering the possibility of creating a series of new courses under the general rubric of Understanding the Modern World with both regional and topical sub-titles, since one of the deterrents we have found to students getting involved in international activities is their embarrassment over their global ignorance, a catch 22 situation.

At the undergraduate level, students can obtain a Certificate in International Studies (equivalent to a minor), while discussion rages over whether we should offer a degree program in international relations. ODU already

has a Masters program in International Studies. Non-degree activities at ODU include opportunities to participate in the Great Decisions workshops, a model United Nations, a model Organization of American States, and an annual International Jubilee. Sponsorship of public lectures and films on international issues, map and poster displays around campus and the promotion of maps, atlases, population data sheets and good relevant books (such as Paul Harrison's Inside the Third World and The Third World Tomorrow, published by Penguin Paperbacks) in the university bookstore all help to draw attention to the international dimension. Vigorous promotion of the geography program fits right in here, too, for geography's contribution to promoting global knowledge and understanding is basic and especially valuable with its spatial perspective and unique synthesis of physical and human, historical and current components. The potential for developing creative ideas for enhancing global knowledge at the secondary school level is enormous too--international days, intra- and inter-school competitions on geographical projects, use of postage stamp collections and maps on stamps, collages or photo essays on parts of the Third World, a "Stamp out Stereotypes" program, or even an "adopt a country" project are but a few ideas.

At Old Dominion University, one significant way we have sought to enhance global understanding has been through heightening faculty awareness to Third World issues so that they in turn could reach a wide number and variety of students through their regular as well as new course offerings. In 1980-82 ODU received a federal grant through the Office of Education for a faculty development seminar; and in 1983 a Fulbright-Hays Group Travel Abroad in Africa program enabled 12 faculty to spend six weeks in

Ivory Coast and Tanzania, comparing and contrasting the conditions, cultures, patterns of development, challenges, and problems of these two very different countries.

Part of the attempt to monitor the effectiveness of the faculty development seminar was a survey of attitudes toward the Third World of students at Old Dominion University. This sought to test whether perceptible change had taken place in students' attitudes toward the Third World over the course of a semester as a result of those students being exposed to the faculty involved in the Third World Faculty Development Seminar. The surveys were administered at the beginning and end of three separate semesters to classes taught by those faculty.

The faculty selected for the seminar represented a wide variety of disciplines including engineering, education, biology, economics, English, anthropology, criminal justice, women's studies, and geography. Obviously not all classes could be expected to bring in Third World materials to the same extent. Courses in physical geography, for example, were far less amenable to a discussion of Third World issues than courses in cultural and political geography. But it is still relevant to ask if any measurable change in attitude toward the Third World took place as a result of students' participation in classes taught by faculty in the seminar.

Unfortunately problems arose from the administration of the survey questionnaires, largely because of personnel changes both in the office responsible and in the computer analysis laboratory. Thus the data are not as complete as desired. The best data are those for the Spring 1982 semester. In addition some students participated in the survey more than once, either by being in parallel classes taught by different seminar faculty, or by being in consecutive classes taught by the same faculty person.

However despite the difficulties and problems inherent in the data, the

attitude survey has resulted in some interesting and important findings.

The Survey

The survey instrument was adapted and expanded from a survey questionnaire prepared by Kathleen Desmond, Development: Bridge to Peace (Washington, D.C.: American Freedom from Hunger Foundation, 1970); Inventory - Global Poverty and Development," an exercise designed by World Neighbors; a Church Women United Survey; and various Overseas Development Council publications. It asked for students' attitudes toward the Third World using a Likert Scale of 1 to 7, followed by a question asking which three issues in the world, in the student's estimation, would be most important for the rest of the century. Questions on personal information completed the survey.

Survey Results

The overall generalized results are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

However, perhaps more important than the overall figures are the changes in attitude that occurred over the semester as measured by the same questionnaires being administered at the beginning and end of each of two semesters. The data demonstrate a significant increase in the awareness of conditions in and empathy for the Third World (see Table 3).

Most change occurred in students' understanding of how the present international economic system perpetuates the poverty of the Third World (question 2). A 10 percent increase was registered in both the Fall 1981 and Spring 1982 semesters (from 61% to 71% considering the statement true in Fall 1981, and from 64% to 74% in Spring 1982). Similarly, there was a large increase in the percentage of students agreeing with the statement

Table 1

OVERALL ATTITUDES TOWARD THE THIRD WORLD

	Percentages		
	Agree	Don't Know or Undecided	Disagree
1. People in the Third World have been oppressed and exploited by the Western World	69	18	13
2. The present international economic system perpetuates the poverty of the Third World.	68	17	16
3. The present international economic system encourages the gap to widen between rich and poor countries.	69	13	18
4. People in developing countries are poor mostly because they are lazy.	8	4	88
5. The U.S. gives too much aid to the Third World.	32	20	48
6. The Third World is ungrateful for all America's help.	31	22	47
7. America can do without the Third World but people in the Third World cannot do without us.	30	10	59
8. People in the U.S. are sensitive to the needs and aspirations of Third World people.	51	8	41
9. Third World people suffer from many more diseases than Americans because they are backward.	36	11	53
10. We should be willing to lower our standard of living in order to help Third World people improve theirs.	27	14	59
11. Our responsibility to people in the Third World ought to be as great as our responsibility to people in the U.S.	31	9	60
12. Schools should teach just as much about the whole world as about the U.S. and Europe.	82	4	14

Number of responses: 1829

Table 2

The three most important issues in the world for the rest of the century:

	Most important	One of the three most important
Hunger	28	44
Energy	16	39
Population explosion	9	26
Coping with technology	8	19
Arms race	8	28
Nuclear proliferation	6	27
Inflation	5	18
Gap between rich and poor	4	12
Human rights	3	13
Spread of communism	3	13
Economic growth	2	11
Pollution	2	15
Moral decay	2	9
Preservation of the family	2	7
Jobs	1	10
Extinction of valuable species	1	4
Refugees	1	2
Health	0.4	6

TABLE 3

Changing Attitudes Toward the Third World

		Percentage considering the statement true			
		Beginning of semester (Fall 1981) N = 398	End of semester (Fall 1981) N = 723	Beginning of semester (Spring 1982) N = 289	End of semester (Spring 1982) N = 333
1.	People in the Third World have been oppressed and exploited by the Western World.	63	70*	66	78*
2.	The present international economic system perpetuates the poverty of the Third World.	61	71*	64	74**
3.	The present international economic system encourages the gap to widen between rich and poor countries.	64	73*	69	70
4.	People in developing countries are poor mostly because they are lazy.	8	8	8	6
5.	The U.S. gives too much aid to the Third World.	35	31	35	28
6.	The Third World is ungrateful for all America's help.	33	31	27	30
7.	America can do without the Third World but people in the Third World cannot do without U.S.	34	32	33	22*
8.	People in the US are sensitive to the needs and aspirations of Third World people.	52	53	50	46
9.	Third World people suffer from many more diseases than Americans because they are backward.	43	36	33	30
10.	We should be willing to lower our standard of living in order to help Third World people improve theirs.	26	26	25	31
11.	Our responsibility to people in the Third World ought to be as great as our responsibility to people in the U.S.	30	33	26	34
12.	Schools should teach just as much about the whole world as about the U.S. and Europe	81	82	83	83

Change from beginning to end of the semester
*significant at the 0.00 level of significance
**significant at the 0.01 level of significance

that people in the Third World have been oppressed and exploited by the Western World, particularly in Spring 1982 (where an increase of 12% occurred, from 66% to 78%); in Fall 1981, the somewhat smaller increase of 7% from 63% to 70% was still significant at the 0.00 level of significance.

A dramatic increase took place in students' awareness of how much we in the United States depend upon the Third World. In Spring 1982, the percentage agreeing with the statement, "America can do without the Third World but people in the Third World cannot do without us," fell by 11% from 33% to 22%.

There was also an increase in the sense of reponsibility that we have to the Third World. Although the percentages are still low, there was a marked increase (of 8%), from 26% to 34% in the number of students agreeing that "our responsibility to people in the Third World ought to be as great as our responsibility to people in the U.S." This finding is consistent with a change in attitudes toward the amount of aid the U.S. gives to the Third World: there was a 7% decrease (from 35% to 28%), in the level of agreement with the statement, "The U.S. gives too much aid to the Third World." This was accompanied by an increased willingness to lower our standard of living in order to help Third World people improve theirs (an increase of 6% from 25% to 31% over the Spring 1982 semester).

The survey registered a slightly greater appreciation of how we in the U.S. are not perhaps as sensitive to the needs and aspirations of the Third World as we originally thought. There was a 4% decrease in the percentage of students considering true the statement that people in the U.S. are sensitive to the needs and aspirations of Third World people (from 50% to 46%).

Correlations with Personal and Socioeconomic Factors

The overall attitudes of students were correlated with a variety of personal variables in order to discover the significant factors affecting students' attitudes toward the Third World.

1. Significance of age

It appears that older students are more aware than younger ones of how the Third World has been oppressed and exploited by the Western World: 64% of the under-20s agreed with the statement in question one whereas 77% of both the 26-30, and over-30 age groups agreed. A similar gap appears in students' understanding of how the present international economic system perpetuates the poverty of the Third World, and encourages the gap to widen between rich and poor countries: 63% of the under-20s thought this statement in question two was true, while 76% of the over-30s agreed (with the 21-30 groups in between with 69%). Sixty-five percent of the under-20s considered the statement in question three to be true, compared with 74% of the 26-30 age group and 73% of the over-30s.

A very interesting difference exists over the question of aid. Whereas 36% of the under-20s consider that the U.S. gives too much aid to the Third World compared with only 26% of the over-30s, the reverse figures are true for perceptions of Third World gratitude for that aid and U.S. help: only 26% of the under-20s consider the Third World ungrateful, compared with 36% of the over-30s age group.

A vast difference in basic knowledge exists about our degree of interdependence: almost twice as many of the under-20s age group think the U.S. can do without the Third World, but that the Third World cannot do without us as the over-30s (38% compared with 20%). A similarly large difference occurs over the question of our sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of Third World people: 61% of the under-20s think we are sensitive, whereas

Significance of Age.

	Under 20 N = 643	21-25 N=677	26-30 N = 179	Over 30 N = 226
Q1. Third World oppressed*	64	70	77	77
Q2. Present system* perpetuates poverty	63	69	69	76
Q3. Present system widens gap between rich & poor	65	71	74	73
Q4. Third World poor because lazy	8	7½	8	5
Q5. U.S. gives too much aid*	36	29	36	26
Q6. 3rd World ungrateful*	26	30	43	36
Q7. US can do without 3rd World*	38	29	20	20
Q8. US sensitive to 3rd World*	61	48	35	43
Q9. Third World suffers more because backward	33	36	43	42
Q10. US should lower standard of living	25	28	24	32
Q11. Our responsibility to Third World as great as to US*	29	28	37	41
Q12. Schools should teach as much about whole world	82	83	80	81

*significant at the .00 level of significance

only 43% of the over-30s (and 35% of the 26-30 age group) considers the U.S. people sensitive. However, more in the older age groups (43% of the 26-30s, 42% of the over-30s) think that the Third World suffers from many more diseases because they are backward, than do the younger students (33%).

In general therefore, older students are more knowledgeable, more empathetic, and more concerned about the Third World; they are more willing to lower their standard of living in order to help Third World people improve theirs (32% compared with 25% for the under-20s); significantly, more in the older age groups consider that our responsibility to people in the Third World should be as great as our responsibility to people in the U.S. (41% compared with 29% for the under-20s). The younger students are less knowledgeable about the historical background and present conditions of interdependence, yet more confident (or arrogant) about their knowledge of and sensitivity to the Third World.

2. Significance of Sex

With only two exceptions (on questions 10 and 12) there are highly significant differences in attitudes toward the Third World associated with sex. Females generally are less knowledgeable or more undecided about the issues than males, but in general they are more empathetic to the situation and conditions in the Third World. For example, 72% (compared with only 63% for males) agree that the present international economic system perpetuates the poverty of the Third World, and 75% (compared with 61% males - a 14% difference) think that this system encourages the gap to widen between rich and poor countries. Fewer think that people in the Third World are poor because they are lazy (6% compared with 10% male).

Significance of Sex

		MALE N = 697			FEMALE N = 1012		
		True	DK	Untrue	True	DK	Untrue
Q1.	3rd World oppressed*	68	10	22	70	14	15
Q2.	Present economic system* perpetuates poverty	63	16	21	72	17	11
Q3.	Present system widens* gap	61	11	25	75	12	14
Q4.	3rd World poor because lazy*	10	6	84	6	3	92
Q5.	US gives too much*	40	17	44	26	23	52
Q6.	3rd World ungrateful*	42	18	40	23	24	53
Q7.	US can do without 3rd World*	33	8	59	28	12	60
Q8.	US sensitive to Third World	40	10	42	52	7	41
Q9.	Third World suffers more because backward	38	12	50	35	11	55
Q10.	US should lower its standard of living	23	13	64	29	16	56
Q11.	Our responsibility to Third World as great as to U.S.*	24	7	69	36	9	55
Q12.	Schools should teach as much about the whole world*	75	6	20	87	4	10

*significant at the .00 level of significance.
DK = Don't Know or Undecided

Far fewer females than males (26% compared with 40%) think that the U.S. gives too much aid to the Third World and far fewer (23% compared with 42% males - a 19% difference!) consider the Third World ungrateful for all America's help. More are willing to lower their standard of living in order to help the Third World improve theirs (29% compared with 23% males); and a significantly larger percentage (36% compared with 24% males) considers our responsibility to people in the Third World to be as great as our responsibility to people in the U.S. By a similar 12% margin more females think that schools should teach just as much about the whole world as about the U.S. and Europe (87% to 75% males).

3. Significance of number of credits completed

There is much less difference than might be expected in the responses given by freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors. In only two questions is there statistical significance at the 0.00 level, and in two more at the 0.01 level of significance. There is a 16% difference in knowledge about U.S. interdependence, with 38% of freshmen thinking that America can do without the Third World but people in the Third World cannot do without us, compared with 22% of seniors. It is encouraging to recognize that a college education does make a difference here. A comparable difference of 15% separates freshmen from seniors on the question of sensitivity to the Third World: 58% of freshmen, but only 43% of seniors think that people in the U.S. are sensitive to the needs and aspirations of the Third World people; again this demonstrates perhaps a growth in humility with education!

A much smaller gap differentiates freshmen from upper class students on the issues of the effects of the present international economic system: 66% of freshmen compared with 70% of seniors believe that the system perpetuates

Significance of number of credits completed

		0-30 N = 525	31-60 N = 379	61-90 N = 369	Over 90 N = 436
Q1.	Third World oppressed	66	69	73	71
Q2.	Present system perpetuates poverty**	66	64	71	70
Q3.	Present system widens gap*	67	64	75	72
Q4.	Third World poor because lazy	9	8	5	8
Q5.	US gives too much aid	36	30	30	30
Q6.	Third World ungrateful	30	30	30	34
Q7.	US can do without Third World*	38	32	28	22
Q8.	US sensitive to Third World*	58	55	44	43
Q9.	Third World suffers more	36	36	37	36
Q10.	US should lower its standard of living	24	30	26	28
Q11.	Our responsibility to Third World as great as to US	32	30	29	34
Q12.	Schools should teach as much about whole world	83	81	83	81

*significant at the .00 level of significance
**significant at the .01 level of significance

the poverty of the Third World, while 67% of freshmen compared with 72% of seniors think that the system encourages the gap to widen between rich and poor countries. Interestingly, juniors (who have completed 61-90 credit hours) rank highest on these two issues: 71% and 75% respectively. They also rank highest on the first question dealing with the idea that people in the Third World have been oppressed and exploited by the Western World (73% compared with 66% for freshmen and 71% for seniors). No other questions drew responses that were significantly different statistically.

4. Significance of Income

Again, the relevance of income (the student's own or his/her parents') is not of particular relevance in determining responses to the survey. On only two questions are the differing responses statistically significant: the wealthy are more likely than the poor to consider that the Third World people suffer from many more diseases than Americans because they are backward, but the percentage favoring this opinion does not increase consistently with increasing income (31%, 39%, 26%, 38% and 45% for each $10,000 income group from under $10,000 to over $40,000). However, it is those less well off financially who consistently feel that we should have as great a responsibility to people in the Third World as to people in the U.S. (37, 36%, 31%, 26%, and 25%).

Despite internal inconsistencies among the different income groups it is those in the lower income brackets who have more empathy for the Third World, with more of them recognizing that the people in the Third World have been oppressed and exploited by the Western World, that the present international economic system perpetuates poverty, and encourages the gap to widen between rich and poor countries. In addition, more of the poor think schools should teach more about the whole world. It is more of the

Significance of Income

		Under $10,000 N=301	$10,001-20,000 N=382	$20,001-30,000 N=360	$30,001-40,000 N=268	Over $40,000 N=345
Q1.	Third World oppressed**	71	76	70	65	64
Q2.	Present system perpetuates poverty	70	71	67	66	66
Q3.	Present system widens gap	71	70	70	69	64
Q4.	Third World poor because lazy	9	8	5	8	10
Q5.	US gives too much aid	32	33	30	31	35
Q6.	Third World ungrateful	32	31	32	30	32
Q7.	US can do without Third World	28	26	31	32	15
Q8.	US sensitive to Third World	48	50	51	53	53
Q9.	Third World suffers more because backward*	31	39	29	38	45
Q10.	US should lower its standard of living	26	26	31	26	25
Q11.	Our responsibility is Third World as great as to U.S.*	37	36	31	26	25
Q12.	Schools should teach as much about whole world	86	82	83	82	79

*significant at the 0.00 level of significance
**significant at the 0.01 level of significance

wealthier than the poor who consider that the U.S. can do without the Third World, and who think that the U.S. is sensitive to the needs and aspirations of Third World people.

5. Significance of religion

No major differences in attitude emerge from the survey in terms of religious preference. However, there is a slight tendency for Roman Catholics to have less empathy than Protestants and others for the conditions in, and the system contributing to the poverty of, the Third World. In general most empathy is shown by those claiming their religious preference as "other": for example, a smaller percentage in this group considers the Third World ungrateful for all America's help (27% compared with 29% for Roman Catholics and 35% for Protestants), thinks that Third World people suffer from many more diseases than Americans because they are backward (32% compared with 37% for Roman Catholics and 38% for Protestants). A small percentage of "others" holds that people in the U.S. are sensitive to the needs and aspirations of Third World people (47% compared with 52% Protestants and 54% Roman Catholics). They also have a slightly higher percentage favoring a lowering of our standard of living in order to help Third World people improve theirs (29% compared with 26% for both Roman Catholics and Protestants), and acknowledging that our responsibility to the Third World should be as great as our responsibility to people in the U.S. (34% compared with 31% Roman Catholics and 30% Protestants). But differences are all within a very few percentage points, and thus are not considered to be major determinants of attitudes.

Significance of religion

		Protestant N=707	RC N=436	Jewish N=41	Muslim N=14	Other N=94
Q1.	Third World oppressed	70	65	71	64	72
Q2.	Present system perpetuates poverty	67	65	71	86	69
Q3.	Present system widens gap	72	65	64	57	70
Q4.	Third World poor because lazy	8	7	12	33	7
Q5.	US gives too much aid	33	32	20	36	30
Q6.	Third World ungrateful	35	29	30	40	27
Q7.	US can do without Third World	30	31	27	36	30
Q8.	US sensitive to Third World	52	54	44	53	47
Q9.	Third World suffers more because backward	38	37	32	64	32
Q10.	US should lower its standard of living	26	26	33	20	29
Q11.	Our responsibility to Third World as great as to US	30	31	23	33	34
Q12.	Schools should teach as much about whole world	81	82	79	79	84

6. Significance of religious and political conservatism/liberalism

As anticipated, there are very strong, consistent correlations between people's religious beliefs and political views as they identified themselves on a conservative to liberal scale and their attitudes toward the Third World. Those who consider themselves to be conservative politically are far less empathetic and understanding of conditions in the Third World than self-acknowledged liberals (by percentage differences of 17 to 19 points). Political views are also more indicative of attitudes than religious beliefs on the conservative to liberal continuum (for example, the range on the first two questions is 60% to 79% and 57% to 76% conservative to liberal on the political scale, but a smaller 60% to 73%, and 60% to 70% on the religious conservatism scale). Far fewer political conservatives hold that our responsibility to people in the Third World ought to be as great as our responsibility to people in the U.S. (22% versus 39% for political liberals), whereas 30% of religious conservatives agree compared with 33% of religious liberals - a much closer score. On most other questions the gap between political conservatives and liberals is greater than that between religious conservatives and liberals.

However, the opposite is true and the contrast between political and religious conservatism is particularly striking over the questions of sensitivity to the Third World and our interdependence. Sixty-one percent of those considering themselves to be religiously conservative think that people in the U.S. are sensitive to the needs and aspirations of Third World people (compared with 43% of religious liberals), whereas only 54% of the politically conservative hold that view (compared with 47% political liberals). Similarly 38% of the religious conservatives feel that America can do without

Significance of religious conservatism

		Conservative N=335	Middle-of-Road N=536	Liberal N=823
Q1.	Third World oppressed*	60	70	73
Q2.	Present system perpetuates poverty**	60	69	70
Q3.	Present system widens gap*	61	69	73
Q4.	Third World poor because lazy	12	7	6
Q5.	US gives too much aid	37	31	30
Q6.	Third World ungrateful**	37	28	30
Q7.	US can do without Third World*	38	30	27
Q8.	US sensitive to Third World*	61	56	43
Q9.	Third World suffers more because backward**	34	36	37
Q10.	US should lower it standard of living	23	24	30
Q11.	Our responsibility to Third World as great as to US	30	28	33
Q12.	Schools should teach as much about whole world	77	81	84

*significant at the 0.00 level of significance
**significant at the 0.01 level of significance

Significance of political conservatism

		Conservative N=416	Middle-of-Road N=640	Liberal N=632
Q1.	Third World oppressed*	60	67	79
Q2.	Present system perpetuates poverty**	57	66	76
Q3.	Present system widens gap*	60	66	78
Q4.	Third World poor because lazy*	12	7	6
Q5.	US gives too much aid*	40	34	23
Q6.	Third World ungrateful&	40	31	25
Q7.	US can do without Third World	31	32	28
Q8.	US sensitive to Third World**	54	53	47
Q9.	Third World suffers more because backward*	40	38	32
Q10.	US should lower its standard of living*	22	22	34
Q11.	Our responsibility to Third World as great as to US*	22	30	39
Q12.	Schools should teach as much about whole world*	76	82	86

*significant at the 0.00 level of significance
**significant at the 0.01 level of significance

the Third World but people in the Third World cannot do without us (compared with 27% of religious liberals), whereas the figures are much closer in the political realm (31% for political conservatives and 28% for political liberals).

7. Significance of travel

Travel appears to be of minor significance in explaining attitudes toward the Third World, possibly because the question did not differentiate between travel in the First World (such as Canada or Europe) and travel in the Third World. Travel outside the U.S. made the largest difference (7%) in people's recognition of U.S. interdependence, with only 26% of those who had travelled outside the U.S. thinking that America can do without the Third World but that people in the Third World cannot do without us (compared with 33% for those who had not been outside the country). A 6% difference separates the foreign travellers from the non-foreign travellers on the question of sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of Third World people: fewer of those who had travelled abroad thought that Americans are sensitive (48% compared with 54% for the non-foreign travellers). Surprisingly, more foreign travellers considered that Third World people suffer from many more diseases than Americans because they are backward (39% compared with 33% for non-foreign travellers).

8. Significance of race

Race or ethnicity is not a particularly significant factor in explaining different attitudes toward the Third World, although there are some interesting correlations. Blacks are less aware of the interdependence of the U.S. in the world than are whites (38% think that America can do without the Third World compared with 29% of whites). However, a smaller percentage of blacks than of whites or others considers that the Third World is ungrateful

Significance of travel

		Outside Virginia N = 863	Outside US N = 839
Q1.	Third World oppressed	69	70
Q2.	Present system perpetuates poverty**	66	69
Q3.	Present system widens gap	69	69
Q4.	Third World poor because lazy	7	9
Q5.	US gives too much aid	33	30
Q6.	Third World ungrateful	29	33
Q7.	US can do without Third World**	33	26
Q8.	US sensitive to Third World	54	48
Q9.	Third World suffers more because backward**	33	39
Q10.	US should lower its standard of living	27	27
Q11.	Our responsibility to Third World as great as US	29	34
Q12.	Schools should teach as much about whole world	82	82

*significant at the 0.00 level of significance
**significant at the 0.01 level of significance

Significance of race

		Black N=148	White N=1461	Other N=80
Q1.	Third World oppressed*	74	70	61
Q2.	Present system perpetuates poverty	69	68	68
Q3.	Present system widens gap	72	70	59
Q4.	Third World poor because lazy	9	7	18
Q5.	US gives too much aid	26	32	36
Q6.	Third World ungrateful*	16	32	38
Q7.	US can do without Third World*	38	29	43
Q8.	US sensitive to Third World	56	50	54
Q9.	Third World suffers more because backward	22	37	46
Q10.	US should lower its standard of living	26	27	34
Q11.	Our responsibility to Third World as great as to U.S.*	41	30	39
Q12.	Schools should teach as much about whole world	90	81	78

*significant at the 0.00 level of significance

for America's help (16% compared with 32% for whites and 38% for others). Similarly a smaller percentage (22%) thinks that Third World people suffer from more diseases than Americans because they are backward (compared with 37% whites and 46% others). Blacks and others feel a greater responsibility to people in the Third World than do whites (41% of blacks, 39% of others compared with only 30% of whites); a significantly higher proportion of blacks (90%) than whites (91%) or others (78%) believe that schools should teach just as much about the whole world as about the U.S. and Europe.

Correlations of Changing Attitudes Among the Different Socioeconomic and Political Groupings

This final section is concerned with analysing the changes in attitude that occurred during one particular semester--Spring, 1982--among the different socioeconomic and political groupings already discussed.

Changes in Attitude According to Age Groups

In general far more significant changes in attitude toward the Third World took place among younger students (those under 20) than among the older students (those over 30). The most striking contrast is in question 7 where a 22% change in attitude occurred among the under-20 age group (a decrease from 44% to 22% of those considering true the statement that the U.S. can do without the Third World but people in the Third World cannot do without the U.S.), while no change occurred in the over-30 age group (a consistent 20% agreed with the statement), and a moderate 12% change took place in the intermediate 21-30 age group (from 30% to 22%). By the end of the semester an increase of 15% in the under-20 age group agreed that people in the Third World have been oppressed and exploited by the Western World (compared with an increase of only 9% in the over-30s); and a similar change

Change According to Age Groups in Spring 1982

	Under 20		21-30		Over 30	
	Beg N=91	End N=93	Beg N=137	End N=179	Beg N=55	End N=55
1. Third World oppressed	59	74	69	79	71	82
2. Present system perpetuates poverty	58	64	66	76	73	82
3. Present system widens gap between rich and poor	62	59	73	75	69	69
4. Third World poor because lazy	13	6	4	7	7	0
5. U.S. gives too much aid	40	25	34	29	29	28
6. Third World ungrateful	33	17	28	34	28	42
7. U.S. can do without Third World	44	22	30	22	20	20
8. U.S. sensitive to Third World	58	48	46	45	41	46
9. Third World suffers because backward	31	30	34	29	32	39
10. U.S. should lower its standard of living	23	34	25	30	31	27
11. Our responsibility to Third World as great as to U.S.	23	27	28	36	29	42
12. Schools should teach as much about whole world	85	81	85	85	76	80

of 15% took place in the younger students' attitudes toward U.S. aid: at the beginning of the semester 40% of the under-20s thought that the U.S. gives too much aid compared with only 25% at the end of the semester. A change of only 1% (from 29% to 28%) occurred among the over-30s.

On five questions change took place in the opposite direction for the under-20s from the over-30s. While the under-20s registered a decrease in the percentage agreeing with the statement that the Third World is ungrateful for all America's help (from 23% to 17%), the over-30s registered their highest percentage change in attitude (from 28% to 42%) in agreeing with that statement. Similarly, while younger students reduced their agreement with the statement that people in the U.S. are sensitive to the needs and aspirations of Third World people (from 58% to 48%), the over-30s increased their agreement from 41% to 46%. Whereas younger students became increasingly willing (by 11%) to lower their living standards in order to help Third World people improve theirs, older students became increasingly unwilling to do so (by 4%). Yet younger students reduced their approval of schools teaching just as much about the whole world as about the U.S. (by 4%) while older students increased their approval (also by 4%).

Changes According to Sex

In general the gap between the sexes in their attitudes toward the Third World narrowed as a result of the semester, although females remain more empathetic overall toward the Third World. The largest change in attitude was recorded for males, with a 15% increase in the percentage of males agreeing that the present international economic system perpetuates the poverty of the Third World (compared with an increase of only 6% for females: however, female scores on this variable remained 3% higher than

Change According to Sex in Spring 1982

	Male		Female	
	Beg N=100	End N=125	Beg N=181	End N=200
1. Third World oppressed	65	77	67	80
2. Present system perpetuates poverty	57	72	69	75
3. Present system widens gap between rich and poor	59	64	75	73
4. Third World poor because lazy	8	11	8	3
5. U.S. gives too much aid	36	37	35	22
6. Third World ungrateful	38	43	21	23
7. U.S. can do without Third World	35	23	31	21
8. U.S. sensitive to Third World	46	47	51	45
9. Third World suffers because backward	34	28	32	32
10. U.S. should lower its standard of living	23	24	27	35
11. Our responsibility to Third World as great as to U.S.	18	30	31	38
12. Schools should teach as much about whole world	71	78	90	86

those for males at the end of the semester). A marked increase (of 12% for males, and 13% for females) occurred in the percentage of students considering that people in the Third World have been oppressed and exploited by the Western World; while a comparably large change (of 12% for males, and 10% for females) took place over the semester in students' appreciation for the interdependence of the U.S. and the world (question 7). A similar 12% increase occurred in males' affirmation that our responsibility to the Third World ought to be as great as our responsibility to people in the U.S. (compared with a 7% increase for females; female scores nevertheless remained 8% higher than male at the end of the semester).

The largest contrasts in changed attitudes between the sexes were over the questions of aid and the U.S. standard of living. While only 1% of males changed their view of whether the U.S. gives too much aid, 13% of females changed their opinions, leading to a 15% gap between males and females on this issue (37% of males and only 22% of females thought that the U.S. gives too much aid to the Third World by the end of the of the semester). Eleven percent more females than males (35% compared with 24%) thought at the end of the semester that the U.S. should be willing to lower its standard of living in order to help Third World peoples improve theirs, compared with only 4% at the beginning of the semester.

Changes According to Income

Education appears to be a homogenizing process: there was a convergence of attitudes over the semester from the more widely diversified breadth of opinions by income group registered at the beginning. For example, on the question of whether the Third World has been oppressed and exploited by the

Western World, the range at the beginning of the semester was from 56% agreement by the upper income group to 74% by the middle income group (an 18% spread); at the end of the semester the gap had narrowed to 4% (76% for the higher income group and 80% for the middle income group). Similarly the range of opinion on whether the present international economic system encourages the gap to widen between rich and poor countries narrowed from 15% to 5% over the course of the semester.

The most dramatic change occurred among the upper income group in their increased appreciation of how the Third World has been oppressed and exploited by the Western World: a change of 20% occurred in their attitudes. Substantial changes among the upper income group took place also in their increased acceptance of our responsibility to the Third World (12%), a decrease in the percentage considering that we give too much aid to the Third World (a 10% change), and an increase in the perception that the present economic system perpetuates poverty (10%).

Among the lowest income group (under $10,000) the greatest change (of 16%) occurred over the question of interdependence: there was a marked decrease in the percentage of students thinking that the U.S. can do without the Third World but that the Third World cannot do without us (from 34% to 18%). (By comparison increased awareness of U.S. interdependence among the upper-income group rose by only 6%.) Over the semester there was a 13% increase among lower-income groups in the number of students considering that the present economic system perpetuates poverty in the Third World. Changes among middle income students ($10,000-$30,000) were less dramatic, with just one notable change: a 12% decrease in the number of students thinking that the U.S. can do without the Third World but that the Third World cannot do without the U.S.

Changes According to Income in Spring 1982

	Under $10,000		$10,000 - $30,000		Over $30,000	
	Beg N=57	End N=51	Beg N=121	End N=152	Beg N=97	End N=114
1. Third World oppressed	68	77	74	80	56	76
2. Present system perpetuates poverty	61	74	69	74	62	72
3. Present system widens gap between rich and poor	75	66	73	71	58	67
4. Third World poor because lazy	7	8	4	5	13	7
5. U.S. gives too much aid	30	29	37	29	36	26
6. Third World ungrateful	19	28	29	34	31	28
7. U.S. can do without Third World	34	18	30	18	35	29
8. U.S. sensitive to Third World	45	51	51	44	48	50
9. Third World suffers because backward	24	30	31	29	40	35
10. U.S. should lower its standard of living	31	25	27	36	19	27
11. Our responsibility to Third World as great as to U.S.	34	40	29	36	18	30
12. Schools should teach as much about the whole world	92	85	79	84	83	80

Changes According to Religious Preference

Most significant changes in attitudes were recorded for Protestants: on five of the questions there was a shift of more than 10 percentage points over the course of the semester (compared with three questions for both Roman Catholics, and "others"). However, the most dramatic change (of 18%) occurred among the "others" in an increased awareness of U.S. interdependence, followed by Roman Catholics with 12% and Protestants with 7%.

At the end of the semester Protestants showed the highest percentage of agreement with the statements that the people in the Third World have been oppressed and exploited by the Western World, that the present international economic system both perpetuates the poverty of the Third World and encourages the gap to widen between rich and poor countries, and that the U.S. should be willing to lower its standard of living in order to help Third World people improve theirs. Similarly, change was most marked among Protestants on question four; there was a decrease from 9% to 2% of those who thought that people in developing countries are poor because they are lazy. However, there was an 11% increase over the semester in the number of Protestants who considered the Third World ungrateful for all America's help, an interesting and unexplained phenomenon.

Both Roman Catholics and Protestants registered a large increase (of 15% and 13% respectively) in their sense of responsibility to the Third World, compared with a change of only 1% (a decrease) in the opinions of the "others." But the "others" had the smallest percentage agreeing with (22%), and the biggest decrease (12%), on the statement that the U.S. gives too much aid to the Third World.

Changes According to Religious Preference in Spring 1982

	Protestant		R. Catholic		Other	
	Beg N=115	End N-130	Beg N=63	End N=85	Beg N=99	End N=107
1. Third World oppressed	65	82	65	77	68	77
2. Present system perpetuates poverty	61	76	68	67	66	76
3. Present system widens gap between rich and poor	72	73	65	64	70	70
4. Third World poor because lazy	9	2	10	8	7	8
5. U.S. gives too much aid	35	31	36	29	34	22
6. Third World ungrateful	28	39	27	24	25	26
7. U.S. can do without Third World	30	23	38	26	34	16
8. U.S. sensitive to Third World	53	50	53	49	44	41
9. Third World suffers because backward	34	32	36	37	29	27
10. U.S. should lower its standard of living	22	35	23	31	31	27
11. Our responsibility to Third World as great as to U.S.	24	37	25	40	31	30
12. Schools should teach as much about whole world	86	81	78	85	84	86

Changes According to Religious Beliefs

The contrasts in attitude between conservatives and liberals have already been noted. It is interesting to note here that the largest changes in students' attitudes occurred among those who classified themselves as religious conservatives. This is particularly apparent in the questions dealing with the historical development of the Third World and the international economic system, where changes in the order of 12% to 16% occurred over the course of the semester. Although conservative students ended the semester still with the lowest percentages believing that people in the Third World have been oppressed and exploited by the Western World and that the present international economic system both perpetuates poverty and encourages the gap to widen between rich and poor countries, they showed the greatest change in their attitudes. Large changes occurred also in the percentage of conservative students considering people in the Third World poor because they are lazy (a 10% decrease), and in their awareness of how interdependent the U.S. is (a 12% change). However, there was an increase in the number of conservatives who consider that the U.S. gives too much aid, and in the proportion of students who think that the Third World is ungrateful for all America's help.

Those who classified themselves as middle-of-the-road on the religious conservative-liberal continuum showed most change (and more than the other two groups) in their attitudes on aid, interdependence and why Third World people suffer from many more diseases: there was an 11% decrease in the numbers thinking that the U.S. gives too much aid to the Third World, an 18% decline among those who believe that the U.S. can do without the Third World, a 12% decrease in the proportion of those who consider that the people

Changes according to religious beliefs in Spring 1982

		Conservative		Middle-of-road		Liberal	
		Beg N=48	End N=61	Beg N=83	End N=94	Beg N=148	End N=167
1.	Third World oppressed	60	72	70	78	68	81
2.	Present system perpetuates poverty	55	71	66	70	68	76
3.	Present system widens gap between rich and poor	57	64	67	67	75	72
4.	Third World poor because lazy	15	5	6	4	7	7
5.	U.S. gives too much aid	32	37	37	26	35	26
6.	Third World ungrateful	29	38	28	32	26	27
7.	U.S. can do without Third World	39	27	39	21	26	20
8.	U.S. sensitive to Third World	61	57	64	52	38	39
9.	Third World suffers because backward	27	28	41	28	30	34
10.	U.S. should lower its standard of living	26	21	19	24	28	39
11.	Our responsibility to Third World as great as to U.S.	30	33	22	30	28	38
12.	Schools should teach as much about whole world	77	77	83	76	86	90

in the U.S. are sensitive to the needs and aspirations of Third World people, and a 13% decline in the number of people who think that the Third World suffers more because it is backward.

Among the religious liberals most change took place in students' understanding of the oppression and exploitation experienced by the Third World (a 13% increase), in a willingness to lower standards of living in the U.S. in order to help Third World people improve theirs (an 11% increase) and in an augmented sense of responsibility to the Third World (a 10% increase).

Changes According to Political Beliefs

As with religious beliefs, most changes in attitudes took place among political conservatives over the course of the semester. Particularly striking was the 19% increase among conservatives in those agreeing that the Third World has been oppressed and exploited by the Western World. There was also an impressive increase in the number of conservatives who believe that the U.S. should lower its standard of living to help the Third World (13%), as well as a healthier recognition that the U.S. is not as sensitive to the Third World as they thought at the beginning of the semester (a 12% change), that the U.S. cannot do without the Third World (a 9% change), and that the present system perpetuates poverty (a 10% change). However, the amount of change on a number of other questions though greater for political conservatives was small (see questions 3, 4, 5, 9, and 11).

Middle-of-the-road students showed most changes over the issues of our responsibility to the Third World being as great as to the U.S. (a 15% increase), increased understanding of our interdependence (a 14% change), and the amount of aid given (a 13% decline in the numbers feeling that the U.S. gives too much).

Changes according to political beliefs in Spring 1982

		Conservative		Middle-of-road		Liberal	
		Beg N=66	End N=69	Beg N=107	End N=126	Beg N=106	End N=122
1.	Third World oppressed	52	71	65	76	78	85
2.	Present system perpetuates poverty	56	65	61	70	73	81
3.	Present system widens gap between rich and poor	58	66	67	63	79	78
4.	Third World poor because lazy	12	4	6	6	7	6
5.	U.S. gives too much aid	39	31	43	30	24	24
6.	Third World ungrateful	32	35	27	33	23	25
7.	U.S. can do without Third World	34	25	36	22	26	20
8.	U.S. sensitive to Third World	62	50	51	42	42	46
9.	Third World suffers because backward	39	35	37	34	24	27
10.	U.S. should lower its standard of living	18	31	22	22	32	39
11.	Our responsibility to Third World as great as to U.S.	19	23	18	33	39	42
12.	Schools should teach as much about whole world	76	75	86	86	86	86

Far smaller and less significant changes were noted among political liberals.

Changes According to Travel

As already discussed, travel seems to be of minor significance in explaining attitudes toward the Third World. Travel outside the U.S. correlates with a fairly large increase in those agreeing that the Third World has been oppressed (15%), and that our responsibility to the Third World is as great as that to the U.S. (11%), but other changes in attitudes are of less significance, indicating little consistency. There are no clear reasons to explain the correlation of travel outside Virginia with the substantial changes in understanding of U.S. interdependence (a 16% increase), and of how the present economic system perpetuates poverty (a 12% increase).

Changes According to Race

Far more significant changes were recorded among different racial groups. Blacks made by far the most dramatic changes in their attitudes (although the small number of blacks (and "other") in the sample indicate that caution should be used in any extrapolation of these results). Great increases over the course of the semester were noted in blacks' understanding of how the present economic system perpetuates poverty (36%), of U.S. interdependence (27%), and of how people in the Third World have been oppressed and exploited by the Western World (22%). There were somewhat smaller but consistent changes in the percentages believing that the U.S. gives too much aid (a 25% decline), that our responsibility to the Third World should be as

Changes according to travel in Spring 1982

		Outside Virginia		Outside U.S. & Canada	
		Beg N=137	End N=142	Beg N=147	End N=179
1.	Third World oppressed	68	76	65	80
2.	Present economic system perpetuates poverty	63	75	67	72
3.	Present system widens gap between rich and poor	72	69	66	69
4.	Third World poor because lazy	7	6	9	6
5.	U.S. gives too much aid	38	29	33	27
6.	Third World ungrateful	24	26	30	35
7.	U.S. can do without Third World	40	24	26	19
8.	U.S. sensitive to Third World	51	51	47	42
9.	Third World suffers because backward	30	29	35	33
10.	U.S. should lower its standard of living	29	31	23	31
11.	Our responsibility to Third World as great as to U.S.	27	33	26	37
12.	Schools should teach as much about whole world	88	81	78	84

Changes according to race in Spring 1982

		Black		White		Other	
		Beg N=27	End N=26	Beg N=238	End N=274	Beg N=15	End N=22
1.	Third World oppressed	67	89	67	77	60	82
2.	Present economic system perpetuates poverty	56	92	65	70	69	95
3.	Present system widens gap between rich and poor	79	89	68	69	63	59
4.	Third World poor because lazy	0	0	9	6	7	14
5.	U.S. gives too much aid	41	16	34	29	38	14
6.	Third World ungrateful	15	15	28	32	31	32
7.	U.S. can do without Third World	39	12	31	22	31	23
8.	U.S. sensitive to Third World	61	58	48	45	44	41
9.	Third World suffers because backward	21	26	33	30	33	50
10.	U.S. should lower its standard of living	25	37	24	30	38	46
11.	Our responsibility to Third World as great as to U.S.	32	48	25	33	33	46
12.	Schools should teach as much about whole world	89	89	82	82	75	91

great as that to the U.S. (a 16% increase), and that the U.S. should be willing to lower its standard of living to help Third World people improve theirs (a 12% increase).

Whites showed no such dramatic changes in attitude over the semester; the largest recorded was a 10% increase in the belief that people in the Third World have been oppressed and exploited by the Western World.

Among "others," changes in attitudes were much more similar to those of the blacks (and again the percentages refer to very small numbers), but they are not always consistent. For example while most of the data reflect significant increases in empathy toward and understanding of the Third World and the need for more U.S. aid and responsibility, there is an unexpected and inconsistent increase (of 17%) in those who think that the Third World people suffer from more diseases because they are backward.

Conclusion

It is interesting to note where the most significant changes in attitudes toward the Third World occurred over the course of the one semester analyzed in detail (Spring 1982). From the preceding discussion it is apparent that overall most change was recorded among political conservatives, blacks, younger students, upper income groups, religious conservatives, males, and Protestants.

It is encouraging to see the changes in attitude brought about by education and exposure to the reality of conditions and life in the Third World. However, as the data on overall attitudes toward the Third World indicate, much more is still needed to promote greater understanding of the Third World.

END NOTES

1. George W. Bonham, "Education and the World View" in Educating for the World View, New York: Council on Learning, 1980, pp. 3-5.